



Preventing and Responding to Conflict

ICAF, Planning, and 1207 Projects

To prevent or resolve violent conflict abroad, the U.S. Government needs tools and approaches to assure coordination of U.S. diplomatic, development, and military efforts supporting local institutions and actors seeking to resolve disputes. The Coordinator for Reconstruction & Stabilization (S/CRS) uses several tools to coordinate a whole-of-government approach to all stages of reconstruction and stabilization (R&S) efforts. In addition to the experts drawn from the Civilian Response Corps and working closely with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), S/CRS has a staff of experts who possess an in-depth understanding of conflict that can assist the U.S. Government in forwarding its efforts to prevent conflict. This expertise can lead to the shaping of interagency projects designed to address the root causes of conflict. Conflict prevention as an explicit, integrated, and prioritized initiative is new to the way the U.S. engages, and S/CRS is working to leverage these tools and approaches into existing activities.

Finding the Drivers of Conflict

To ensure that all elements of U.S. national power have a common understanding of the environment of a violent conflict, S/CRS applies a systematic and collaborative tool called the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF). The ICAF involves all relevant U.S. Government departments and agencies to facilitate a deeper understanding of the conflict and stability dynamics in a region or country. Policy makers and planners alike increasingly see application of the ICAF as a critical first step in decision making for states affected by or vulnerable to violence. State Department Regional Bureaus and U.S. Missions overseas, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Department of Defense have all requested S/CRS assistance in applying the ICAF to their countries of concern.

Mitigating the Drivers of Conflict

S/CRS and Civilian Response Corps members apply a specialized planning framework that can be used for both conflict prevention and conflict transformation in order to integrate assessment and strategic planning across agencies in both Washington and the field. This whole-of-government assessment and planning process ensures that all elements of national power share a common understanding of an environment and work toward common strategic objectives. As a result, resources are applied more efficiently toward desired outcomes, lessons learned are shared and applied, and assistance is targeted to mitigate drivers of conflict and to build local institutional capacity.

Funding Stabilization

S/CRS manages the interagency process for the Department of Defense-funded Section 1207 Program. Congress created this funding authority to support civilian-led, whole-of-government projects that address causes of instability or escalating violence in countries of critical relevance to U.S. national security or policy interests. The current global portfolio of 1207 funding contains \$350 million to support R&S projects in 23 countries worldwide. In addition to funding the projects, S/CRS has supported several embassies and their USAID missions in their design of an integrated approach to addressing the causes of instability.

Key Recent Efforts

Panama: S/CRS conducted an ICAF at the U.S. Embassy in Panama to address challenges to stability in Panama's Darien region. The findings of this assessment led to the development of a 1207 project to strengthen the Government of Panama's capacity to maintain security in this area.

Pakistan: Going beyond Whole-of-U.S.-Government planning, S/CRS coordinated an international planning team, along with representatives from Pakistan's federal and provincial governments, to produce a five-year strategy for Pakistan's troubled and strategic Malakand province.

Haiti: The Haiti Stabilization Initiative's (HSI) integrated approach to civilian-led R&S has brought palpable change to Cité Soleil, a troubled Port-au-Prince neighborhood. HSI's goal was to quickly stabilize the violent gang-led environment so that regular U.S. Government programs, other donors, and the Haitian Government could begin to work normally.

Bangladesh: A yearlong partnership between S/CRS and the U.S. Embassy in Bangladesh resulted in the FY 2011 Bangladesh Mission Strategic Plan (MSP) being recognized by the Department of State as "MSP of the Year." This S/CRS-facilitated, whole-of-government strategic planning process was timed to coincide with Bangladesh's transition to democracy after a two-year caretaker government.